



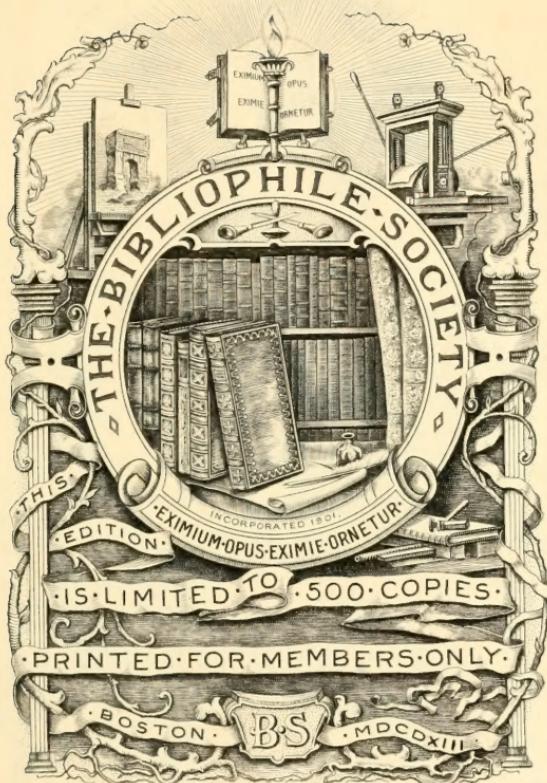
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TWELFTH YEAR BOOK
THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



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OFFICERS AND COUNCIL FOR 1913

WILLIAM D. T. TREFRY, *President*

WILLIAM P. TRENT, *Vice President*

HENRY H. HARPER, *Treasurer*

J. ARNOLD FARRER, *Secretary*

HENRY CABOT LODGE

WILLIAM LINDSEY

EDWARD C. ROBINSON

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

BE IT KNOWN, that whereas Nathan Haskell Dole, Henry H. Harper, Charles E. Hurd, J. Arnold Farrer, William D. T. Trefry, John Paul Bocock, and W. P. Trent have associated themselves with the intention of forming a corporation under the name of THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY, for the purpose of the study and promotion of the arts pertaining to fine book making and illustration, and to the occasional publication of specially designed and illustrated books for distribution among its members at a minimum cost of production, and have complied with the provisions of the statutes of this Commonwealth in such case made and provided, as appears from the certificate of the President, Treasurer, and Directors of said corporation, duly approved by the Commissioner of Corporations, and recorded in this office:

Now, THEREFORE, I, William M. Olin, Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that said Nathan Haskell Dole, Henry H. Harper, Charles E. Hurd, J. Arnold Farrer, William D. T. Trefry, John Paul Bocock, and W. P. Trent, their associates and successors, are legally organized and established as and are hereby made an existing corporation under the name of THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY, with the powers, rights, and privileges, and subject to the limitations, duties, and restrictions which by law appertain thereto.

WITNESS my official signature hereunto subscribed, and the seal of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts hereunto affixed, this fifth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and one.

(Signed)

WM. M. OLIN,
Secretary of the Commonwealth.

{ L. S. }

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

ALTHOUGH the Society's bibliography for 1912 is the only twelve months' record in twelve years which shows no publication, apart from the regular Year Book, the work actually accomplished during the period was neither small nor unimportant. The *Elegy* and *Deserted Village*, though practically completed in 1912, could not be delivered in that year. The volume and portfolio of Swinburne MSS., although nearly finished, will not be announced until the spring of 1913. In addition we have in hand the MSS. for two other volumes which give promise of attracting widespread interest.

Our activity in publication during previous years has been such that the deficiency recorded for the past year may perhaps be regarded as a welcome intermission for all concerned. In determining the frequency

with which publications should be issued the Council has been influenced more by the availability of suitable material than by any sense of obligation to get out books at stated periods, regardless of their intrinsic merit.

The structure upon which the prestige of The Bibliophile Society rests is constituted entirely by our publications, and with each succeeding year the Council feels an increasing responsibility to maintain the security of our position in the world of books by making every issue worthy of a place among its predecessors. The difficult nature of this task becomes obvious from a retrospective glance over the issues of our first decade, during which we had the singular good fortune to secure many unique treasures for publication. If our volumes during the second ten-year period should show a decrease in numbers, it is to be hoped that by Fortune's continued favors they may possess such internal and external qualities as will enable them to compare favorably with the issues of the first decade.

The well sustained interest in our books is a feature deserving of special notice.

Though it has been hinted that some book clubs are experiencing difficulty in maintaining the interest of their members in their publications, our average subscriptions for all issues during the twelve years, allowing only one copy to each member, amounted to 96 per cent. of the full membership. This is not mentioned in a spirit of ostentation, but as a matter of information, and in support of the statement that the interest in our books has suffered no abatement. Perhaps this remarkable showing is in large measure due to our good fortune in procuring so many valuable unpublished MSS., though doubtless it may also be attributed in part to the artistic excellence of our books. Another consideration not to be too lightly regarded is that, being relieved from annual dues, our members perhaps feel a moral obligation to give their support by subscribing regularly for the books we issue. Although our publication account is necessarily encumbered with all incidental running expenses, the generous support thus far accorded by a loyal membership has enabled us to enrich our volumes with numerous

etchings and engravings by the best artists, without advancing the pro rata cost above that of the publications of other book clubs which charge this expense against the income derived from annual dues.

In this connection it may not be too fanciful to remark that our membership represents not only all sections of the country but a wide diversity of tastes and vocations. Our personnel supplies an indisputable verification of the truth that the germs of bibliophilism find a receptive and congenial atmosphere in the inclinations of men and women in a great variety of occupations. Chance or necessity may decree a man to embark in any one of a dozen or more business pursuits; but his pleasure-seeking pursuits spring rather from an inborn and volitional tendency which seldom acknowledges obeisance to any law of Fate. The harmless ovules of bibliomania are confined to no particular caste, creed or nationality, as evidenced by the fact that our membership is, in large part, made up of sixty-three lawyers, eleven judges, twenty-eight doctors of medicine and dentistry, ten clergymen,

ninety-five manufacturers and merchants, twenty-five bank and trust company presidents, five United States congressmen, three United States senators, three life insurance presidents, thirty-seven bankers and brokers, eight newspaper editors, fifteen book dealers, art dealers, and publishers, four college professors, nine railroad presidents, and ninety-eight capitalists, both active and retired.

In the past year or so — to turn to another topic — members have occasionally remarked upon the fact that some of our Bibliophile books have sold below their normal prices. The same conditions also apply to gilt-edge investment stocks, bonds, and all kinds of merchandise. When books are bartered as articles of commerce it must be expected that they will become sensitive to the general conditions of trade in like manner with other wares. We note with some satisfaction that our Bibliophile books have given a very creditable account of themselves in the auction room,¹ and that the prices obtained have

¹ In verification of this fact it may be stated that the amount realized for an almost complete set of the Bibliophile

not suffered by comparison with the figures at which other club books have sold. If they have sometimes sold below the exorbitant prices to which they have been bid up at previous sales, this testifies more to the sober discretion of the later bidders than to a depreciated value of the books themselves. Our books have not yet become so excessively rare that they need be bought at highly fictitious prices; neither are they so plentiful that the owner need sacrifice them at figures below their real worth. There are a number of our volumes which on account of the historical value of their contents are constantly sought for by public libraries and historical societies, which fact has of course increased their scarcity, and enhanced their market price.

In proportion as our publications grow in numbers the frequency of their appearance in the auction room is likely to increase. The collections of deceased members are occasionally dispersed under the auctioneer's publications sold by auction in New York, on January 9, 1913, aggregated \$662.25, or more than fifty per cent. above their original cost.

hammer, and there are also occasional instances of living members being compelled through the vicissitudes of fortune to part with their libraries. In such instances the items that are most readily convertible into cash are the ones first likely to be drawn upon. The fact that a book — or a whole library — is offered for sale, either publicly or privately, is by no means conclusive testimony that the owner no longer cares for it. It is indeed a compliment to books that, like a paid-up life insurance policy, they respond with alacrity to the necessities imposed by pecuniary misfortune. But in case of forced sale it is almost inconceivable that the owner should be surprised or disappointed if, perchance, after using and enjoying his books for years, they fail to return a net profit over their original cost. A book-collector who is impelled only by sordid motives, — regarding his books merely as slaves, or objects of barter, — would perhaps murmur at such a catastrophe, but no genuine bibliophile could be so niggardly disposed toward his cherished treasures as not to credit them with the pleasure derived from companionship

with them. If under conditions of compulsory sale they return a profit — as they are apt to do — he accepts it as a benefaction andmingles his regrets over the separation with a justifiable measure of self-felicitation on his discernment as a collector.

The average book-collector receives so many catalogues now-a-days that to read them all through carefully would leave but little time for other pursuits, and unless he is interested in some particular book or subject, the numerous catalogues of dealers and auction sales companies are likely to be thrown aside with scarcely more than a casual glance. It is only the more important and widely advertised sales that attract the notice of the majority of book-buyers, and at such sales the bidding is likely to be more spirited, and the prices correspondingly higher, than at the less important sales. In minor sales, attracting comparatively few bidders, and therefore but little competition, desirable books are often picked up at prices far below what they would bring at another sale causing more widespread notice. Such inconspicuous sales and the stocks of second-

hand dealers may be recommended to members desiring to complete their sets of our publications or to secure duplicate volumes. Such members might even find it advantageous to place orders in London, where copies of our publications are not infrequently offered — never at low, but often at reasonable rates.

New members desiring to send bids on back issues of the Bibliophile books listed in auction catalogues should first ascertain the original cost of the volumes — which information may be obtained from the bibliographies in the Year Books, and particularly from the list on the last printed page of the Eleventh Year Book — and then limit their bids to some figure within a reasonable range of the cost price. It is needless to add that if bids of this reasonable kind should prove unsuccessful the first time, another attempt at some future sale may bring better luck.

It may be hinted that the value of many fine books is greatly impaired by continued exposure to dust and careless handling. Considering the soiled and slovenly appearance of some of the books offered for sale, it is

astonishing to see not how little, but how much they bring. It is not surprising that their owners, even under conditions of affluence, should wish to be rid of them. No other article of household furnishing, under like conditions of wear and misuse, would bring the price of cartage to a junk-shop. A book must be excessively rare, if not indeed unique, not to have its market value materially lessened by abuse. Dust-proof cases are now provided for all our volumes, and it will be found expedient to keep them in these cases unless they are placed in absolutely dust-proof bookcases,— which are rather uncommon.

It is a singular fact that the rarest of all the Bibliophile publications is by far the least pretentious and the least expensive item among them,— the facsimile reproduction of the letter of John Paul Jones written aboard the “Ranger” in the harbor of Quiberon, arranging for the first national salute ever given our flag in Europe. The cost of issuing this was paid from a small surplus left over from a previous publication, and one copy was sent to each member without

charge. A great number of them must have been thrown away under the misconceived idea that it was some unimportant circular matter, for many of the members have since declared that they do not recollect receiving it.

Another item — of much historical importance — is virtually “buried alive” in the Fifth Year Book, the selling price of which in the open market has not thereby been enhanced one per cent. If this document — which is reproduced in photographic facsimile — with the accompanying supplementary letters, and the remarks by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart — had been issued separately it would be eagerly sought for by historical societies and collectors of Civil War literature throughout the country, and it would doubtless bring three or four times as much as the whole volume in which it so inconspicuously reposes. It is the original, and previously unpublished, order of General P. G. T. Beauregard to open fire on Fort Sumter, — the order to fire the shot that started the Civil War.¹

¹ “Few documents in the history of the Civil War have the

In the front of the same volume there appears a beautiful poem of forty lines by Longfellow, never before printed. This is also given in photographic facsimile. Indeed, throughout the Year Books there are many such items, which, although of unmistakable interest to the collector, were incorporated in these annuals for the reason that their length was deemed insufficient to justify separate publication.

Almost the only one of the Bibliophile publications that appears not to have been appreciated at its true artistic worth and dramatic significance of Beauregard's General Order No. 14, of which a facsimile here appears — its first publication in any form so far as can be discovered. It is the explicit order to the various batteries to fire upon the relief squadron expected in the harbor on April 12, 1861, and also to bombard Fort Sumter. The order, dictated by Beauregard, was authorized by instructions from the Confederate Secretary of War at Montgomery, after a long discussion between President Davis and his Cabinet. It is the final link in the chain of causation which led to the Civil War. . . . As the boat pulled away from the landing at the fort, the Confederate aides must have felt that they were carrying the destiny of a nation with them; for, pulling across to Fort Johnson, they conveyed Beauregard's directions that the signal shot should be fired, and in a few minutes nineteen batteries were plying the doomed fortress, and the great civil conflict between North and South was begun." [From Professor Hart's introductory remarks, p. 85, Fifth Year Book.]

literary importance is the Letters of Charles Lamb. The first volume, containing engravings by French and Spenceley, four beautiful etchings by Bicknell, and a great number of the most perfect heliotype facsimiles of Lamb's MSS. and letters, with notes and comments by the late Doctor Richard Garnett, was, with but a single exception, the most expensive volume ever produced by The Bibliophile Society. Its cost was nearly double that of all four of the other volumes in the set, which contain 1392 pages of text. The manuscript material that was printed complete for the first time in this edition is valued at many thousands of dollars, and the publication of the work was one of the most noteworthy achievements of The Bibliophile Society. It will in due time come into its own and will meet with that universal appreciation to which it is so justly entitled.

Turning from the past to the future, we beg to emphasize once more the fact that the Council is always disposed to welcome suggestions from members with regard to new lines of activity. We are precluded by the

nature of our organization from attempting frequent exhibitions of rare books and prints such as contribute much to the success of clubs possessing a building which serves as headquarters and library combined. This fact is the less to be regretted since universities, public libraries, and societies temporarily established to celebrate special events are increasingly in the habit of giving such exhibitions in order to arouse public interest. Many of our members, however, have such interesting collections that it may some day be desirable to consider the feasibility of inaugurating a loan exhibition to emphasize the solidarity of the Society, the range of its interests, and its importance as an exponent of American culture. Such an exhibition, held at some central point, might well mark some important stage in our history — such, for example, as our entering upon our third decade. It is not a matter of immediate interest, but it serves to show what possibilities of usefulness are latent in our organization.

Some years ago the suggestion was made that the Society, while not abandoning its

policy of giving variety to its publications, should concentrate upon the preparation of a great scholarly edition of some writer worthy of the honor and not already exploited: for example, Coleridge. This suggestion met with considerable favor, but it must be admitted in fairness that it involves grave difficulties. The preparation of such an edition is very slow, costly, and liable to great interruptions, and it is a task that belongs quite as much to a special society or to a University as to an organization like our own. The time may come when such an undertaking may seem not only feasible but imperative, and in the meanwhile it may be noted that at any time an edition of such an author as Coleridge may be begun under the patronage of some member or group of members, special facilities for subscription and support being given to our members, the experience of the Society in issuing attractive books will be freely placed at the disposal of the editors and patrons of the enterprise. An edition of a standard author thus undertaken would be a by-product of

our activity in which we should all take a legitimate pride.

It is easy to suggest other by-products of equal value — for example, contributions to bibliography. In this category of books about books are already found some notable publications of book clubs, but experience has shown that they do not appeal to all members of such clubs. Is it not a fair inference that in the main a society such as ours should devote itself to publishing in the best possible form books of permanent literary interest or else of new and incontestable importance to history and biography, but that it may well be possible for groups of members to combine in the preparation and publication of scholarly by-products which shall reflect credit upon them and upon the Society? The Council hopes that on these and other topics — particularly on the make-up of our Year Books — it may be favored with the views of members, and it once more acknowledges with gratitude the generous support they have so long and so uniformly given to its work.

THE COUNCIL

THE ABUSE OF THE TERM
DE LUXE



THE ABUSE OF THE TERM DE LUXE

DEARLY bought experience is perhaps the best known antidote for the human credulity of collectors and hobbyists in various pursuits. The individual who exhibits a fondness for books, or paintings, or engravings, or stamps, or antiques, is constantly beset by sharpers—human leeches—who impose upon the inexperience and vanity of mankind, and grow fat at the expense of their victims.

The inclination toward fine books being a common characteristic among people of good taste, there are perhaps more collectors of books than of all the other items mentioned combined. This large and constantly increasing clientele insures a highly productive field for a certain class of publishers and their agents, who manifest a

patronizing interest, especially in new recruits among the book-collecting fraternity,—for the seasoned collector, having paid the price of his experience, is no longer an object of easy prey.

It would appear that when a person with newly acquired book-collecting tendencies is discovered by some agent in the trade the word is passed along and the new buyer is thereafter led to suppose that he is placed on an equal footing with the Prince of Wales, J. P. Morgan, and the Emperor of China, in the enjoyment of special privileges in getting hold of rarities. If he "falls in" and suffers his vanity to be thus tickled, the question of expense in such fast company must of course be regarded as a secondary consideration.

The brazen mendacity and bare-faced swindling methods of some of these publishers' agents of late has hastened them to their own ruin, and their practices have been checked by arrests and grand jury investigations. Although the exposures have proved annoying to the victims whose names and portraits in the newspapers have been

brought so prominently before the public, the ultimate effect will be wholesome, and it is to be hoped that book-buyers and hobbyists in general will profit by the revelations.

Through the machinations of a few self-styled publishers and their unscrupulous agents the much abused term "de luxe" has come to have about the same significance in the popular mind when applied to books as the word "gold" has when applied to the proverbial brick. A few years ago the owner of de luxe (signifying luxurious) editions of books took justifiable pride in displaying his treasures so as to excite the mingled admiration and envy of friends and neighbors. In the light of recent exposures, however, anything tagged "de luxe" is left sealed in the original packages and stored in the cellar or some other out-of-the-way place for fear lest some inquisitive visitor may discover it before it is resold—at the large premium promised at the time of its purchase.

Before the term "de luxe" came into general misuse as a means of "buncoing" unsus-

pecting book-buyers, a bibliophile was glad to own as an accomplishment the taste for books thus designated; but today in lieu of a graceful adornment it has in several cases become a positive affliction, to be accused of which is equivalent to an insult; and the man who becomes widely known in the community as a "de luxe buyer" absents himself from his favorite club and shuns his friends, as if they all had some infectious disease. He is likely to wake up any morning and find his name—and perhaps his portrait—conspicuously adorning the front page of the morning paper under some such heading as "Another Dupe!" or "Victim of Book Swindlers!" And what is, if possible, even more exasperating, he is then summoned to appear before the grand jury to testify against the dealer or agent, and incidentally to give implied evidence of his own gullibility. The victim thus feels the heavy impress of the brand, "Easy Mark," on every part of his anatomy; and it is a calamity for which no sympathetic friend or relative can offer any soothing balm, for no relationship, however intimate,

would insure the safety of anyone broaching the subject in his presence.

The truth is that the books involved in these transactions are not truly de luxe books at all. They are only pretentious makeshifts, and have but little if any artistic or commercial value. Whatever value they may have had in their original form is usually destroyed by the substitution of counterfeit title-pages with some high-sounding name, and pretending a very limited issue. In the place of the customary number a star is sometimes used as the symbol of extreme scarcity. This is indeed an appropriate device, since the horizon of the unprincipled publisher contains a star for every buyer who has the price of the agent's story,—for the story is vastly more interesting than the books themselves, and that is really what the purchaser buys.

It is worthy of remark that many of the recent "de luxe book scandals" have resulted, not from book-loving propensities, but from an adventurous merchandising tendency on the part of the victims. With utter disregard of the hazards of specula-

tion, some of them entered into league with the agents to take costly sets of books, to hold them for a while, and then share the tremendous profits on their re-sale to someone else. In transactions of this nature the buyer is moved by purely mercenary rather than book-loving motives; and under the temporary influence of the agent's cajolery and promises of large profits he casts all the laws of business ethics to the wind and embarks in the book business in partnership with an unknown traveling agent, who agrees to sell the books again for a portion of the profit. It is not therefore a book-lover who is befooled, but rather a book-speculator who, willing to take a gambler's chance, becomes a party to a "gentleman's agreement" to find another dupe easier than himself. He is sure to lose, because he is betting on an impossibility.

The "de luxe agents" frequently collaborate in team work,¹—while one is waiting to open negotiations with a prospective cus-

¹ Those who recall the article entitled "Observations in General," in the Fifth Year Book, issued in 1906, will remember that an instance of this species of trickery in a somewhat modified form was called to the attention of the members.

tomer for the sale of a costly set of books, his colleague, who perhaps represents himself as the confidential secretary and librarian to the Duke of Some-Place-or-Other, is engaged in the most strenuous efforts to purchase the same set of books from the same customer at some exorbitant price. This is clearly a case where selling "short" could be recommended; for if the middle-man in the transaction were familiar with stock market tactics he might sell "short," to the Duke's secretary, then "cover" his sale at a good profit.

When the customer buys the books he notifies the Duke's secretary—whose address has been given him. Possessed of the coveted property he assumes the rôle of book dealer, and lies in wait for his promised customer, who meantime having received the "high sign," sends a note of regret that he has been temporarily called away on important business, but will return in a few days.

The agent calls again to see him, and in breathless anxiety imparts the news that he has found another buyer who wants the

books at a greatly increased price, and endeavors to buy them back. The customer is "wise," however,—or thinks he is—and refuses to let them go, even at a premium. In confidence the agent finally reveals the name of the new customer—the Duke's secretary who, he says, "has just left for Chicago, in quest of a set of books there on which I hold an option. The price is \$5,000, but I have been unable to raise the amount. He is willing to pay ten thousand for this set, and if I could raise the money I could telegraph it through the bank, take up the option and have the books sent here to you, and we could divide the profit, netting twenty-five hundred apiece." Seeing a chance to add considerably to his anticipated profits, Mr. Mark finally goes to his bank with the agent and transmits five thousand dollars by telegraph direct to the "collector" in Chicago who owns the books. The said collector then returns to the East with the money and divides it with his "pal." A day or so later, the Duke's secretary calls and reports a highly disappointing trip to Chicago; but his joy is unconstrained

when he learns that the very set of books he went after has been bought for him and will arrive at Boston in a few days. He takes a bill of sale of the two sets, paying five hundred dollars cash down as a guarantee of good faith, and leaves for a few days to round up some more sets he has in view, so that they may all be sent abroad in one shipment. Incidentally, having bought some valuable books from a certain agent, will Mr. Mark please receive and hold them with the others if they should be brought in?

Next day another gentleman calls; he represents the man in Chicago who owned the second set of books. After shipping the books he found that a mistake had been made—the set, instead of being worth five thousand dollars, is worth twenty thousand. He offers to return the purchase price, with five thousand more in order to get the books back. On being told that they have already been sold to another he leaves the office—heartbroken. Next day the first agent appears again with an automobile load of books done up in bundles, accompanied by their owner. The agent takes Mr. Mark

aside and explains the facts: he has bought these books for eight thousand dollars and sold them to the Duke's secretary for twelve thousand; but he has paid only one thousand down, and the owner will not turn them over until the balance is paid. The agent will divide the profits if the other seven thousand is advanced for a few days. Mr. Mark hasn't that amount of ready cash left, but he raises it inside of an hour, and takes the books under shelter. He waits a week, two weeks, a month; but no one calls to get the books or to sell him any more. When at length he emerges from his trance, the lively comedy in which he so cleverly played the central part has become a tragedy, and on awakening he finds himself in sole possession of the stage,—and the books. He then remembers that of all the boxes and packages stacked about his offices he has not opened a single one, and does not know for a certainty whether they contain books or grindstones. On opening them up and calling in an expert he finds that the whole lot would not bring five hundred dollars in any auction room in the country!

Booklovers whose motives stand for what the name implies have no reason to become discouraged, or to disown their inclinations, because of such farcical episodes. Books of genuine merit are not to be discredited or brought into permanent ill repute through the use of the term "de luxe" for improper purposes, any more than good stocks and bonds are injured by the army of "get-rich-quick" fakirs that sell great quantities of bogus securities to the unwary persons who come under the influence of their glowing advertisements and cleverly devised prospectuses. With these wares, as with books, it is the inexperienced and over-credulous who suffer the losses. The circumspect investor relies either upon his experience and judgment, or upon the advice of a reputable banker or broker; and in like manner the prudent book buyer should be guided by his own wisdom, or in the absence of such wisdom, seek the advice of some reliable authority. He should, moreover, stick to his own line of business in transactions for profit, and leave the pur-

suit of merchandising in books to those engaged in it as a means of livelihood.

It is a deservedly high compliment to fine books, that they may, in a legitimate manner, be made the implements with which to unloose the purse-strings of busy men of affairs. Most men who are upright in their business dealings are unsuspecting of chicanery in their fellow-men, and this tendency is imposed upon by human sharks in many lines of trade. A man may not be easily deceived in his own business, but having no means of controverting a seemingly rational representation of goods in a line of trade with which he is unfamiliar, he is obliged to accept the statements, if at all, at their face value.

It would be ridiculous for a man to purchase from a glib-tongued stranger an investment bond issued by a company of which he knew nothing whatever, without first taking the pains to investigate it. It would be equally absurd to contract for a costly set of books on any kind of terms through a strange agent representing an unknown publisher. Booklovers who deal

with publishers or dealers of good repute, whether directly or through their authorized agents, have little to fear.

It is to be expected that a hobbyist in any pursuit will get unhorsed occasionally; otherwise there would be neither zest nor excitement in riding his hobby. But as a compensation for early errors of judgment one of the keenest enjoyments of book-collecting is realized when in the light of a not too costly experience you can smile triumphantly at the story of the fakir who mistakes you for a novice.

H. H. HARPER

EARLY JOURNALISM

EARLY JOURNALISM

BY PROFESSOR WILLIAM P. TRENT
OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

THE opening of the School of Journalism founded at Columbia University by the late Joseph Pulitzer has given rise to some discussion with regard to the present standing and the probable future status of journalism as a calling or profession, but I am not aware that many eyes have been turned back to survey the interesting history of journalism from its beginnings, about three centuries ago, to the year in which we now live. Doubtless this history will in time occupy the attention of more than one professor and of many students, but for the nonce it is the immediate and the practical features of their task that are absorbing the energies of all connected with the new school. It was prob-

ably not a typical student who demanded that nothing happening before the year 1912 should be brought to his attention, but this literally up-to-date young man does not completely misrepresent the modern and utilitarian spirit of our would-be journalists.

For myself, interested as I have long been in the two centuries — the seventeenth and the eighteenth — that saw the press of the English-speaking peoples develop into one of the greatest of all the forces of civilization, I may say frankly that the founding of the new school at Columbia seems to offer primarily two great advantages to the country — an opportunity to hasten the development of that high professional status from the lack of which the calling of the journalist has suffered ever since there were journalists, and an incentive to the systematic study of the steps by which newspaper men, despite the drawbacks incident to their work, have become a power, mainly I think for good, in every civilized community. It is the latter of these two topics about which I wish to say a few words in this paper, for the discussion of it may open up interesting lines

of reading and collecting to my fellow Bibliophiles.

Let me say at the beginning that my own interest in the history of journalism is entirely what may be called a "side issue" from my main studies, and that I am not in any sense an "authority" on the subject. It happened that in the course of some early work on Southern history and biography I was led to examine many files of newspapers and to go through numerous volumes of long-defunct magazines, with the result that I became inured to this far from comfortable form of labor and convinced, at first hand, of its great interest and value, not merely to historians and biographers, but to students of sociology and of literature. It was soon impossible for me to take toward journalism the somewhat supercilious attitude many students of what is called "pure literature" find it natural to assume. Dusty though those practically undisturbed volumes were, ephemeral though most of this newspaper and magazine writing had necessarily proved itself to be, I could not but feel that I had been brought face to face with the

hopes and fears, the beliefs and prejudices of men and women quite as much alive in their day as the living writers of whom we hear most are in ours; I could not but perceive that I was looking, as it were, into a kind of magic mirror, in which, with the right sort of eyes, I could see, not the future as in the old mirrors of romance, but the past, the very form and pressure of the vanished years. Though it might not be literature that I was examining, it was surely material for literature; and I was often led to wonder why some of it had not lived. "Is it fair," I asked myself, "to bring to light every scrap of the writing of Journalist Poe — much of it bad — and to leave many a better thing of Journalist A or B or C reposing securely in oblivion?" I have not answered my own question yet, partly because an inner voice has kept whispering to me "Self-preservation is the first law of Nature." With so much written and being written, selection in literature is imperative, whether or not the methods by which it is accomplished be invariably equitable.

A few years later I became absorbed

in the life and writings of the first English journalist who can fairly be called a man of extraordinary genius, Daniel Defoe. The world knows him chiefly as the author of *Robinson Crusoe* and some other works of fiction, but his contemporaries thought of him in the main as a versatile and unprincipled journalist. It was to the newspapers and the pamphlets of his time that I was forced to turn for new information concerning him, and when I began to prosecute my studies in England, I found that my previous research in American newspapers stood me in good stead. Within the past six years I have examined practically every newspaper for the period 1690-1731 contained in the great Nichols Collection at the Bodleian, as well as many in the Hope Collection in the same library, and I have done nearly as well by the large Burney Collection in the British Museum. The Nichols and the Burney collections, while overlapping, so supplement each other that the minute student, especially the bibliographer who is using advertisements in order to ascertain the dates at which books were pub-

lished, is obliged to make a fairly thorough examination of both. It is a formidable task, for, while the newspapers of that early time were small, there were many of them. Thus without intending primarily to study British journalism at all, I found myself observing its evolution from the days of eccentric John Dunton, who discussed all sorts of queer matters in his "Athenian" periodicals, through the tri-weeklies conducted by such men as the Scot George Ridpath and the Frenchman Abel Boyer, through the partisan papers of Tutchin, Leslie, and Defoe, through the essay-periodicals of Steele and Addison and their imitators, through the special journals devoted to commerce, insurance, and the like, through the mixed weeklies like those of Mist and Read, which dealt partly with politics, partly with news, and in which we see the "leading article" slowly developing itself into the modern editorial, down to the days when Bolingbroke and Pulteney were assailing Walpole, and Pope was using "The Grub-Street Journal" to overwhelm his literary foes. An extraordinary period of forty years during which

statesmen learned to use the press as an instrument with which to appeal to the public, and in which the most brilliant men of letters, Swift, Addison, and Steele for example, did not think it beneath their dignity to contend with out-at-the-elbow professional journalists, who wrote for a small pittance and with the fear of the pillory and a prison ever before their eyes.

A little later my studies led me to examine the years immediately following the Popish Plot, when Roger L'Estrange and Henry Care, two of Defoe's masters, were the leading political journalists of London. These violent partisans attacking each other in diatribes couched in dialogue — a crude form which apparently did not die out until nearly forty years later — carry us back almost to the beginnings of the English newspaper, for the first periodical publication that deserves that name was the *Oxford Gazette* (soon the *London Gazette*) of 1665. There had been, of course, journalists and journals before that date, but it was news-pamphlets rather than news-papers that kept Englishmen of both sides informed of what

was going on during their great civil war. Singularly enough, the history of the journalism of this earliest day, illustrated as it is by the great name of Milton, has been told with scholarly fulness and accuracy only within five years, in a most valuable book by Mr. J. B. Williams. We still need to have the story of the advance of journalism in the last quarter of the seventeenth century told with equal care, and then we shall be ready for the books of the scholars — it is probably too great a task for one man — who will give us the history of the eighteenth century newspaper in Great Britain and her colonies. This is the century of the daily newspaper, of the slowly developing department of local news or gossip, of the literary journal, of the magazine, and in this, as in every other respect, it is a century that ill deserves the reproach of dulness so lavished upon it by writers of a romantic bias. When one compares the single meagre leaf of *The Daily Courant* of 1702 with a *Times* of 1913, one is inclined to mutter something about “the day of small things,” but as one watches the rapid evolution of journalism in the cen-

tury and realizes what that evolution meant in the progress of mankind toward truly popular government, one is inclined rather to mutter that "it is the first step that counts." Neither of the quoted phrases contains the whole truth, and, fortunately, we are not compelled to choose between them. We may recognize in the history of the rise of British and American journalism a field of work that ought to attract many students in our schools of journalism, a field some spots of which have already been exploited — in at least two cases by Americans.¹

This is a long and perhaps too personal preamble, but I trust that it will show why it is that I am so much interested in the history of journalism in England and America. Why I am anxious to interest others in it by means of this informal paper is easily explained. It is a common and not unamiable characteristic of people with a hobby — particularly professors — to wish to advise others to seek pleasure where they them-

¹ By Miss E. C. Cook in a book described herein, and by Prof. G. Ames, Jr., in *The English Literary Periodical of Morals and Manners*, 1904.

selves have found it, and there are already books dealing with the history of journalism with which I think some of my readers may be pleased to become acquainted. For example, a former pupil of mine, Miss Elizabeth Christine Cook, has just written a monograph entitled *Literary Influences in Colonial Newspapers*, which has attracted a good deal of favorable comment. Few people have ever thought of looking into our early newspapers for anything literary, save perhaps in connection with Benjamin Franklin. But, while he is naturally an important figure in Miss Cook's book, he is not an overshadowing one. If anyone overshadows the volume, it is Joseph Addison, who, through the *Spectator*, dominated every early American editor from Boston to Charleston. Miss Cook has gathered much interesting material with regard to the reading done by our ancestors; she has shown that would-be essayists and poets in fair numbers used their local newspapers in order to place their effusions before a small but not undiscriminating public, and she has not only rescued some worthy names from oblivion but has

made it clear that, in the South at least, there was more interest in the drama than is usually thought to have been the case.

This book illustrates one way of studying old newspapers; the volume by Mr. Williams to which reference has been made illustrates another. Still another is represented by a life of Sir Roger L'Estrange by Mr. George Kitchin, which has just been published in England. Studies of leading American editors of the past are now being written in this country, and both here and in Great Britain the opportunity of the competent biographer is great. I have already mentioned three early English journalists of whom we need biographies, Dunton, Ridpath, and Boyer, and the number of newspaper men worthy of elaborate or brief treatment is very large. If the public that cares for solid and informing books pays due attention to the books already accessible and to those in preparation that bear on the history of British and American journalism, we may be sure that authors will come forward to fill the gaps in our knowledge of this important and interesting subject.

It is plain, however, that these willing authors will not be able to make their books completely creditable American products unless they are helped by librarians and collectors. Fortunately there is no longer much need to insist that librarians should recognize the value of early newspapers and magazines as material for historical study; it is rather incumbent upon us to sympathize with them on account of the grave problem that faces them when they have to consider the matter of storing the immense product of the press of today. The newspaper we skim and toss aside will become in a couple of centuries as important to a certain class of students as the *Daily Courant* of 1713 is to a small class of students in the present year of grace. How to choose wisely among our many newspapers, how to preserve the perishable things when they are chosen, how to make them accessible and yet avoid outgrowing even the most spacious accommodations — these are questions which our public librarians are facing with little hope of finding an answer that will satisfy everyone. The best one can do for the present is to hope

that in the great centres of population they will be as liberal as possible in their decisions with regard to the amount of so-called ephemeral literature that they will preserve. So often it is the thing cast contemptuously aside that the student finds indispensable.

With regard, however, to early British newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets it seems not amiss to say something to librarians and to private collectors. These are materials of priceless importance to students of history and literature, but many of our libraries, if I may judge from my own experience, pay little attention to them, and private collectors, in the main, pay none at all. It is true, especially in the case of the newspapers, that they are becoming more and more difficult to obtain, and that sometimes, when very rare, they bring prices that are prohibitive save to opulent collectors — for example, such periodicals as Defoe's *Review*, and his *Mercator*, the latter of which, though occupying only one folio volume, has brought as much as \$350. Yet any one who examines closely the catalogues of British second-hand dealers knows that fre-

quently important periodicals either in complete or broken sets can be picked up at remarkably low prices. Last summer I just missed securing for a few shillings two large volumes of Tutchin's *Observator*, and by two purchases made a few months apart I have lately managed to buy at a cost of less than \$10 a complete file of Care's *Weekly Pacquet*, a very important periodical for the student of early British journalism. By placing orders with dealers and by having auction sales watched it is possible for American librarians, even at this late date, to do something toward gathering representative newspapers of the eighteenth century and to complete their sets of such indispensable periodicals for reference as Boyer's *Political State*. As for the pamphlets, which are a most important branch of the journalism of the period, they are still coming into the market in large numbers, and do not, save in special cases, command high prices. They are being sought by collectors, particularly by economists, but the country can still absorb large quantities of them without outrunning the needs of students. This is espe-

cially true of university libraries, for the students of English history and English literature who are being trained to write special monographs are very numerous, and it should be made possible for them to pursue their studies to completion on this side of the Atlantic. By liberal buying on the part of libraries and by the application of photography to extremely rare sets and volumes it may some day be possible to study English history and literature in practically every field, quite as successfully in Boston, New York, or Chicago as in London, or in Oxford.

I know that there is a prejudice against much of the work done in our universities by way of special monographs on obscure men and seemingly unimportant topics, and that hence any suggestion that librarians and collectors make smoother the paths of such specialists will not be welcomed in certain quarters. Students of "pure literature" join hands with "practical men" in endeavoring to push to one side the "dry-as-dust investigator." But when he does not arrogantly imagine that his own small work of quarry-

ing a single stone is more important than that of the master-builders of the temple of learning, we have no real cause of quarrel with the investigator. Without his patient research any large work of permanent character is impossible. If any one doubt this, let him compare the opening chapters of the early histories of British journalism with the authoritative work by Mr. Williams to which I have already made two references.

Yes, both the librarian and the collector may rest assured that in providing materials for minute students of the rise and progress of the periodical press in the English-speaking countries they will be performing a praiseworthy service to the cause of scholarship, the interests of which, when rightly viewed, are closely bound up with those of civilization. But here it is only fair to differentiate the collector from the public- or the college-librarian, and when this is done I shall bring this paper to a close.

The responsibilities that rest upon a librarian are large and, at least when compared with those that rest upon the collector, fairly definite. On the other hand, as long

as individualism can make any sort of stand against collectivism, we shall continue to believe that the collector is a person more or less privileged to follow his own tastes or even his whims in the acquisition of his treasures. In order to show that any American collector would do well to devote part of his time and money to collecting old British and American newspapers, magazines, and pamphlets, one must be able to make it appear fairly probable that such a collector would derive profit and pleasure from the somewhat forbidding volumes gathered on his shelves.

One cannot, of course, adduce in such a connection anything that will pass muster as real proof. It is probable that in order to enjoy the forming and the possession of a collection of the kind I have described the collector must be a person, not only of antiquarian rather than æsthetic tastes, but also of a habit of mind akin to that of the minute, patient investigator. He must certainly be actuated by something very different from the kind of pride men take in owning and exhibiting first editions — often of books of

which a later edition is really the rarer and the more interesting. Perhaps his chief endowment must be a vivid interest in whatever is human, combined with a half ironical, half commiserating interest in the transitory, more or less submerged activities of the human spirit manifested in by-gone periods. However all this may be, I am at least certain that there are among American collectors men who would care for these old newspapers and pamphlets, if they once began to collect them, and who would display in acquiring them the same zeal and acumen they now exhibit in making those collections of books and manuscripts that are at once a source of pleasure and fame to their owners and of profit and pride to the country at large.

Concrete illustrations of the pleasure to be derived from the kind of collecting I am advocating will be more convincing than any general discussion. They can be easily given, but my space will not permit me to enlarge upon them. The quaint advertisements, particularly of quacks, are a source of considerable interest, as has already been

perceived by the compilers of certain books. The evolution of the department of local as opposed to foreign news is equally interesting, though less amusing. This is particularly true in the matter of the notices of the deaths of distinguished personages. Imagine the public of today being satisfied with the bare statement in two or three lines that a man who had once occupied, not precisely the throne, but the seat of supreme power, had passed away. Yet this is what happened in the case of Richard Cromwell. Great noblemen, eminent and wealthy merchants, distinguished writers went to their accounts and obtained entries, so to speak, in the nation's public ledgers no more detailed and interesting than were accorded the pettiest transaction in the books of a retail tradesman. Queen Anne's returns from the Bath to Windsor were usually mentioned in fewer lines than would be given today to the arrival of a drummer at a hotel. A fire that would now get two columns then got a tiny paragraph. Some very disreputable crime, which now-a-days would be described in a round-about but by no means curtailed

fashion, was then bluntly but distinctly set forth in all its loathsomeness. Lovers of sensation were forced to depend upon free-spoken pamphlets or upon the gossip of their clubs and coffee-houses. Yet in one sense they were perhaps better off than persons of kindred tastes today. They could see and be in a larger number of riots, thief-chases, and similar occurrences. London in the year of Sacheverell's trial, and Bristol in the year following the accession of George I were far from being pleasant places of abode for peace-loving citizens.

As food for reflection I have found old newspapers and pamphlets by no means insipid. I shall avoid moralizing upon them here, but I cannot help closing with the remark that the hours I have spent upon them have not made me any less content that my lot is cast in the twentieth century. When on opening my morning newspaper I receive full in my face a blast of "hot air" from some publicity-seeking politician, I wish I were back in the British Museum turning over a volume of the Burney Collection; but when I read the famous *Cato's Letters* con-

tributed by John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon to the *London Journal* during the exciting period that followed the bursting of the South Sea Bubble, I am more than content that I live in the period of the "muck-raker," little as I admire that type of popular hero. Wild and unscrupulous though many of the attacks of our journalists and politicians upon financiers and conductors of large enterprises have probably been, these agitators seem at no time, so far as I can tell, to have quite so brazenly and so truculently played the demagogue in their appeals to the passions of the mob as did the two writers I have just named, whom their partisans dubbed "eminent patriots." I am not sure that our demagogues are in heart or mind any better or any worse than their forerunners of two centuries ago, but I am sure that the public of today is less ignorant, less violent, less gullible than the public that read the London newspapers over which I have strained my eyes. I am equally sure this more civilized and still slowly improving public is in considerable measure the product of two centuries of a more or less free press.

CONCERNING THE FRIEND WHO
SENT KEATS SOME ROSES

As late I wandered in the hatched fields
What time the ~~Highland~~ ~~should~~ ~~the~~ ~~heavens~~ ~~now~~ ~~descend~~
From his ~~lute~~ above ~~now~~, when ^{ancient}
Quoth he, 'Burst up their dulcet Thickets
I saw the ~~the~~ ~~smelles~~ ~~of~~ ~~now~~ ~~such~~ ~~nature~~ ~~yellow~~
A fresh blazon blent roses, ~~twas~~ the first that there
The Leaves upon the Spur, scarf it green
As is the broad that Queen Eliz are we has,
And as I doasted on its fragrance
I thought the dear rose it far excell'd
But when I Wells My Rose, i rene to me elle
My dear with their delicacies and virtues she
Soft voice had they that with tender flow
Whisper'd Peace and Truth and Friendship
and gall.

CONCERNING THE FRIEND WHO SENT KEATS SOME ROSES

BY H. BUXTON FORMAN, C. B.

ONE of the prettiest of Keats's earlier sonnets is that which forms page 83 of the much-coveted little volume entitled simply *Poems*, published by the Olliars in 1817. The sonnet is headed *To a Friend who sent me some Roses*; and the friend has long been identified as Charles Jeremiah Wells, a school-fellow of Keats's brother Tom, who assuredly should have taken his place in the first rank of the literary geniuses who adorned the late lamented century. Why Wells did not take such a place by universal acclamation, many reasons have been adduced — some philosophic, and some not very philosophic or even soundly critical; but it is safe to set down two leading temper-

amental features: first, an indolence only to be overcome in the pursuit of pleasure of one sort or another; and, secondly, an irresistible impulse to place prominently in his repertory of pleasures the reprehensible pastime known as practical joking or hoaxing.

I am inclined to think that his relish for that dangerous pursuit was still lively up to a late period of his life; and I am convinced that his dramatic and poetic genius and especially his natural command of that great instrument the English language never left him but with his latest breath.

With his prowess as an exponent of the hoax, English literature has an account which might be written up on orthodox debit and credit principles; and this I hope to show to the members of The Bibliophile Society in the course of the present contribution to their Twelfth Year Book.

It will be well to keep for the moment to the sonnet of which the title heads this paper, and the *dramatis personæ* who certainly stand behind it. First for the sonnet: as Keats published it in his little volume of poems in March 1817, it reads as follows:

As late I rambled in the happy fields,
 What time the sky-lark shakes the tremulous dew
 From his lush clover covert; — when anew
Adventurous knights take up their dinted shields:
I saw the sweetest flower wild nature yields,
 A fresh-blown musk-rose; 'twas the first that threw
 Its sweets upon the summer: graceful it grew
As is the wand that queen Titania yields.
And, as I feasted on its fragrancy,
 I thought the garden-rose it far excell'd:
But when, O Wells! thy roses came to me
 My sense with their deliciousness was spell'd:
Soft voices had they, that with tender plea
 Whisper'd of peace, and truth, and friendliness un-
 quell'd.

The persons of the drama which led up to
this fresh and sweet composition are:
John Keats, poet, aged twenty years and
 eight months;
Thomas Keats, his younger brother, aged
 sixteen years and seven months, and
 marked for early death; and
Charles Wells, a popular but somewhat
 riotous lad of fifteen, not suspected of
 being a poet.

Of the details of the earlier of two dramas
enacted by these three youths — for there
was a second and somewhat tragic one —

we know but little; even Richard Henry Horne, the author of *Orion*, who was a schoolfellow of Tom Keats and of Wells (called in early days "Charleyboy"), could only tell me vaguely that there had been an unpleasantness between John Keats and Wells, and that "Charleyboy" approached "Junkets" (as Hunt called him) with the propitiatory offering of a bunch of roses. The "great Orion," at the close of his long and ceaselessly energetic life, believed the unpleasantness to have arisen from some practical joke perpetrated by Wells on Tom, and resented by John, who was his brother's fighting champion in all times of need, as well as the constant attendant at his bedside during his last sickness.

However, that unpleasantness was squared by Wells with his charming gift of roses; and Tom was evidently also placable, for he wrote his brother's responsive sonnet out in a copy-book, well known since 1883 among the authoritative documents for variations and amendments in the text of Keats's poetry. In that copy-book the sonnet is headed, "To Charles Wells on receiving a

bunch of roses," and dated June 29, 1816; and the last line reads:

Whispered of truth, Humanity and Friendliness unquell'd.

This was the only known manuscript (until a few years ago) demanding collation with the printed text of 1817; and "poor Tom's" transcript has been, and may still properly be, accepted as a precise reproduction or virtual facsimile of an autograph manuscript of John's own, not now forthcoming. Assuming that the condoned offense of Wells was against Tom, and so doubly against the poet, the whole affair doubtless belongs to the first half of 1816 and may safely be taken to have been some hoax perpetrated by Wells in a characteristic spring gambol or attack of midsummer madness when "Charleyboy" was fifteen. However bad the business may have been, it is probable that Keats thought better of the insinuation in the Tom Keats reading of the last line that the offense had savoured of inhumanity as well as untruth — albeit the essence of a hoax is almost invariably a lie, and that of most practical jokes, even if not aided

by lying, a gross want of consideration for the feelings of the victim. Be that as it may, apart from the pleasure of forgiving, the poet found his account as a metrist in turning a Chapman's Homer seven-footer into an Alexandrine.

The holograph of which a facsimile appears at the beginning of this paper was at one time in the possession of Richard Woodhouse, of whose Keats papers I have overhauled a vast quantity at various times (for they got scattered); but, up to the time when my Oxford edition of Keats (1906) appeared, this little original manuscript had not passed under my eye; and I have never seen any other Keats holograph of the sonnet. This may possibly be the copy given or sent to Wells in 1816. It is not headed, however, or addressed. It is much worn by being folded and unfolded and carried about in some one's pocket; but "under which king" it suffered thus, who shall say? Its textual value is almost confined to the pointing and capitalizing, and is not great; but the poet seems to have wavered between *wandered* and *rambled* in the first line, for the

original which Tom copied must have had *rambled*, though it had the obviously unregenerate last line; and this copy that Woodhouse preserved has *wandered*, originally, in ink, but *rambled* (the better word) written above it in pencil and also on the outside of the folded paper — though the substitution is not in Keats's best writing, if his at all.

It is indeed a curious circumstance that for roughly half a century a man of Wells's powers should have been better known as the giver of a bunch of roses to Keats than as the author of *Joseph and his Brethren*, and not very favourably known even as the rose-giver. From midsummer 1817 things went well between the reconciled friends for a time; and when George Keats took Tom away to get him the advantage of a softer air in the winter of that year, the poet, though pursuing his craft ardently in and near London, saw a great deal of the lively Wells and enjoyed himself, as much as other young men of the time did, in the sprightly company of this boy of sixteen or seventeen.

On the 4th of January, 1818, Keats entertained Wells and Severn to dinner at Hamp-

stead, where he was living, and, as he wrote and told his brothers, they had “a very pleasant day.” The poet had “pitched upon another bottle of claret,” and declared, not only that the three friends enjoyed themselves very much, but that they “were all very witty and full of rhyme,” that they “played a concert” from 4 o’clock till 10, and finally that they drank the health of George and Tom Keats and the Hunts. Let the wit and fulness of rhyme be noted specially for what they may be worth to Wells later in the story; and be it known to those who do not know about those “concerts,” that it was the mode of the young Keatses and their intimates, when fairly riotous, each to imitate with his vocal organs some musical instrument, and so produce a piece of mimetic concerted music. Whether this was original with that set, or known in public performances in the first quarter of the last century, I do not happen to know; but what I do know on the subject is that when my good parents were bringing me up in the small seaport of Teignmouth, they let me go to a performance of the kind organized by one Hofmann, who,

with a band of six men, was tramping the United Kingdom early in the third quarter of the century. There, when Keats and Tom were long dead and Wells (as we shall see anon) was lost in France, I heard at the Assembly Rooms, within two minutes' walk of the house where the young Keatses had lodged (first George and Tom and later John and Tom), a performance of "Hofmann's Organophonic Band," as it was called. That performance I shall never forget; and I recollect with especial vividness the hunting song with its rattling burden sung by the thickset Dutchman with the bass voice, accompanied by the six organophonic minstrels. With what *gusto*, and with what imposing gesticulation, the fellow rang out

With a hey, ho, chivy!
Hark forward, hark forward, tantivy!

and the rest of the refrain ending with

This day a staa...aa...g moost die...ie
This day a staa...aa...g moost die! —

and how beautifully the bolt upright immovable six managed *their* "concert!"

Ah! What would one give to know that

Wells had carried this practice into Brittany when he went boar-hunting there, and had imparted its mysteries to that burly Dutchman who led the band? But I must not indulge in fancies connected with Teignmouth while facts are waiting for me at that place to be dealt with. It was to Teignmouth, of course, that Keats sent his brothers the accounts of his and Wells's "high jinks;" and back from Teignmouth in due time comes the story of a much more exciting if somewhat rowdy evening in January, 1818, which "Charleyboy" and "Junkets" spent partly at some private theatricals, partly at Drury Lane theatre, and partly at a pothouse.

Through Wells's interest (probably through his mother) they had obtained the entry to the private theatricals, at a house near Drury; but Keats, thinking they might be "fatigued with sitting the whole evening in one dirty hole," got the Drury ticket; and they divided their time between the dirty hole and "a spice of *Richard III.*" Keats scoffed at the private performance as of the lowest order, and at the house as a place to be appropriately described as "the Sign of

the Guttered Candle." The pieces played were *John Bull* and *The Review*; and *Bombastes Furioso* was to have concluded the entertainment. After seeing Act I of *John Bull* and taking their "spice of *Richard III*" at Drury Lane, the lads came back to "the Guttered Candle," and found the performance virtually over; but Charleyboy's influence was strong enough to get them passed behind the scenes. According to the poet's racy account to his younger brothers, there was not a yard wide all the way round for actors, scene-shifters, and interlopers to move in; the Green Room was under the stage; and there was he, the immortal John Keats, "threatened over and over again to be turned out by the oily scene-shifters." There, too, were his august ears regaled, and not prudishly shocked either, by hearing "a little painted trollop" own very candidly that she had failed in her part of Mary, with a "damned if she'd play a serious part again as long as she lived," — at the very moment when she was still clothed as the Quaker in *The Review*. There the poet whose contemplations at that period were fixed for the

most part on the romantic loves of Endymion and Diana heard of a quarrel between the performers, told by a fat good-natured looking girl in soldier's clothes, who averred that "she wished she had only been a man for Tom's sake," — (not Tom Keats's, but her particular Tom's). The fate of the *Bombastes Furioso* performance still hung in the balance: "one fellow," records the misplaced poet, "began a song, but an unlucky finger-point from the gallery sent him off like a shot." And again — "One chap was dressed to kill for the King in *Bombastes*, and he stood at the edge of the scene in the very sweat of anxiety to show himself, but alas the thing was not played." Of this wonderful night which the future author of *Lamia*, and *Isabella*, and *The Eve of St. Agnes*, and *Hyperion* passed with the future author of the scriptural drama of *Joseph and his Brethren*, *Stories after Nature*, etc., etc., "the sweetest morsel" is alleged by the elder of "that lovely twain" to have been in the fact "that the musicians began pegging and fagging away — at an overture — never did you see," says he, "faces more in earnest,

three times did they play it over, dropping all kinds of correctness, and still did not the curtain go up. Well then they went into a country-dance, then into a region they well knew, into the old boonsome pothouse, and then to see how pompous of the sudden they turned ; how they looked about and chatted ; how they did not care a damn ; was a great treat." When this record was sent to his brothers Keats was clearly on terms not only to be the boon companion of Wells at such a scene, but to dine with Wells's parents by their invitation at their house in that queer little Holborn alley called Featherstone Buildings, where he seems to have spent an evening with "Charleyboy" earlier in the winter.

But even this kind of Earthly Paradise "cannot last ever," any more than Falstaff, when there is Endymion still to get through his troubles, Tom still to be looked after at balmy Teignmouth — not so balmy, either, if the wind be a gale from the south-east — and George to have his guard relieved in order that he may get married to Georgiana Wylie and be off to America to look after

himself and found one of the most respectable families in Kentucky. So "Junkets" and "Charleyboy" must part for awhile, though in "friendliness unquelled." Whether they ever met again, either as friends or as enemies, we need not enquire just now. Early in March Keats was installed in the lodgings at Teignmouth, ministering to the stricken lad whom he so tenderly loved, and who, according to their brother George (years after), understood John better than any man alive did. There he was, in that part of England from which his father is believed to have migrated to London to do humble work at the "Swan and Hoop" livery stables, and ultimately marry his master's daughter. Not only was Keats looking after his father's invalid child in the year which "the moving finger" had written down as the year of that child's death, but after his own bantling, as he called *Endymion*. With that, indeed, he was in the final throes of parturition; and, having finished with it, he sent for the opening stanzas of *The Pot of Basil*, finished that, and wrote many minor poems and beautiful letters to absent friends. None to Wells are

known to be extant, though Keats certainly had had in Hampstead items of news from Teignmouth, sent by his brothers to Wells.

Tom's health having improved in his Devonian winter quarters, John took him back to Hampstead in May. In leaving him there in the midst of friends in June, the poet's worst apprehension was that the invalid might be lonely at the lodgings in Well Walk. It had been some time arranged that Keats and Charles Brown should go on a walking tour to the Cumberland Lakes and Scotland; and a disastrous tour it turned out to be. Keats himself was badly hit by the hard life and exposure; and Tom got so much worse again that the doctor had John sent for, and he was back by the 18th of August. All through the autumn his brother's illness pressed upon him with a heart-rending urgency — only terminated by the poor boy's death in the night of the 1st and 2nd of December, 1818.

It was probably between the beginning of June and the middle of August that Wells, in the character of "Charleyboy" the Arch-hoaxter, came once more into this domestic

story — with deadly effect. Tom Keats, like his brothers and his mother, was very susceptible to the tender passion, as the cant phrase goes. He was nineteen years old on the 18th of November, 1818; and it must not be forgotten that Wells was still but eighteen. In an evil moment it occurred to that young scapegrace, beloved and pampered of all who knew him for his wonderful *gusto*, his exuberant animal spirits, and his abounding wit and humour, to fabricate a correspondence of which the tenour was that a fictitious lady (Amena, by name) was in love with Tom — whose chagrin at the discovery of the deception was so desperate that his brother John believed it to have hastened his end.

It is a grievous thing indeed to contemplate that a much loved and in many ways most lovable boy like Wells should have been so misguided as to perpetrate on a sick friend a hoax which led so great a poet and so noble a fellow as John Keats to form resolutions and write words the most bitter among his recorded utterances.

Up to the time of Tom's death the poet

does not seem to have known the rights of the story, nor till well into the next year — having taken one more step towards his own doom by moving down from Well Walk to a pair of semi-detached villas then known as Wentworth Place, one occupied by Charles Wentworth Dilke and his wife and son, and the other by Charles Armitage Brown, and both, from time to time (as available) by Mrs. Brawne and her daughters Fanny and Margaret. It was with Bachelor Brown that Keats now shared a house; and to his allotted rooms he gradually moved his possessions from Mrs. Bentley's lodgings in Well Walk. On the 15th of April, 1819, he made an expedition to put together all letters to or from the three brothers. That, at all events, is what I understand by the inexact phrase, "and put all the letters to and from you and poor Tom and me," which occurs in a journal-letter to George.

"I found," he says, "some of the correspondence between him and that degraded Wells and Amena. It is a wretched business; I do not know the rights of it — but what I do know would, I am sure, affect you

so much that I am in two Minds whether I will tell you anything about it. And yet I do not see why — for anything, tho' it be unpleasant, that calls to mind those we still love has a compensation in itself for the pain it occasions — so very likely to-morrow I may set about copying the whole of what I have about it: with no sort of a Richardson self-satisfaction — I hate it to a sickness — and I am afraid more from indolence of mind than anything else. I wonder how people exist with all their worries."

Before finishing the letter on the 3rd of May he had gone over the papers and come to understand the whole episode; and it seems that Wells took the part of correspondent with "Amena," whose part was taken by some male accomplice — Wells bringing the letters to Tom as a friendly go-between. This is what John writes to George:

I have been looking over the correspondence of the pretended Amena and Wells this evening — I now see the whole cruel deception. I think Wells must have had an accomplice in it — Amena's Letters are in a Man's language and in a Man's hand imitating a woman's. The instigations to this diabolical scheme were vanity,

and the love of intrigue. It was no thoughtless hoax — but a cruel deception on a sanguine Temperament, with every show of friendship. I do not think death too bad for the villain. The world would look upon it in a different light should I expose it — they would call it a frolic — so I must be wary — but I consider it my duty to be prudently revengeful. I will hang over his head like a sword by a hair. I will be opium to his vanity — if I cannot injure his interests. He is a rat and he shall have ratsbane to his vanity — I will harm him all I possibly can — I have no doubt I shall be able to do so. Let us leave him to his misery alone except when we can throw in a little more.

From this it may be judged that Keats's set thought more of *truth and humanity* than of wit, humour, and other brilliancy, and had completely isolated young Wells, not merely by a passing cut, but for good and all.

It is not for a moment to be believed that the lad realized the effect that the deception would have on his victim. Keats's language on this theme is extravagant; but, just as our knowledge of the poignant suffering with which he realized what his brother had gone through leads us to condone the inhumanity of such a deliberate and prudent *vendetta* as he promised himself at the age of twenty-three and one-half years, so, and with more

cogent reason, must our knowledge of the temperament and youthfulness of Charles Wells lift from the lad's character the heaviest of the charges in Keats's indictment. Wells was only too human, although, in my opinion, never what I should call a bigoted truth-teller, any more than the icelandic sagamen of the tenth century. He had a portentous imagination; and his inborn craft as a sagaman came so close to the realities of human life that remembrance and imagination tended ever and anon to mingle, as I know they did in a far less degree in his schoolfellow and dramatic friend Horne.

Among all the papers I possess of and relating to Wells, I know of no account from him of the details of his rupture with Keats; and the world will, I feel sure, do him the ultimate justice of believing that he would have been ashamed to relate that sin of his boyhood when he came to his full mental stature. Horne, who was three years younger than Wells, never was in the set. A practical joke at Sandhurst had nipped his intended career in the bud; and he was away in the new world, commencing a course of

roughing it in all sorts of perils by land and sea, at the time of the rupture. Wells's energy was driven inward, with the result that he not only began to produce ostensible literature, but formed the determination to show Keats and his friends that he also had notable powers. This point has been put by him and for him over and over again. That he produced between the death of Tom Keats and the middle of 1823 two most remarkable books, one of prose fiction and the other of dramatic creation, is certain; but how soon after the rupture is still open to conjecture. By the time the books materialized he had started in the career of a solicitor, selected for him by his parents; and the debtor and creditor account both of Wells and of posterity with the objectionable propensity to hoaxing and practical joking had been duly opened on both sides: on the debit side of the account stands the sorry tale of the broken friendship between two unique spirits, on the credit side the existence of two books, one much more treasurable than the other, but both treasurable.

As to the literal accuracy of Wells's state-

ment written to me on the 27th of July, 1875, that he was twenty years old when he composed *Joseph and his Brethren* — I have no feeling of conviction: indeed I think he must have been a little older; it is not a matter of great consequence; but what is of consequence is the statement made to W. J. Linton in 1845, in a letter which I have recently had the good fortune to add with several others to my Wells collection.

He was at that time making a deliberate and strenuous attempt to use his remarkable literary gifts for what they were worth in the labour market, and had got into practical contact with the artist and reformer, Linton, who had taken up Horne's and Wade's public estimates of the two books uttered by Wells in 1822 and 1823, and now sought Wells's coöperation. Wells gave him leave to reprint what he liked from the *Stories*, though cautioning him against them, and offering more powerful and suitable ones. It was thus that the author of the *Stories* and *Joseph* wrote of them in 1845 in the unpublished correspondence I have just unearthed:

With regard to the *Stories after Nature* I am willing to coöperate with you as you propose . . . but trust nothing to my judgment in advising you to republish them — pray see your way clear, for I would not have you come to loss on any work of mine on any account. . . . There are others far better able to advise you. . . . I confess candidly I always thought them mediocre affairs. With regard to *Joseph and his Brethren*, it is impossible to procure a copy. . . . I am constantly being applied to on the same score and the post which brought your letter also delivered one from a lady at Jersey . . . all anxiety on the same subject. A Mr. Wade whom I do not know had given her a volume of his poems in which, it appears, he has spoken of *Joseph* in *measureless* terms of praise — such as I cannot repeat — terms which show that either he is cracked or I am a devilish clever fellow and don't know it. Its history is this: it was published by Whittaker about 20 years ago . . . it sold like wildfire and it was universally reviewed and every review *without exception* spoke well of it. . . . I wrote it in six weeks to compel Keats to esteem me and admit my *power*, for we had quarrelled, and everybody who knew him must feel I was in fault; but he was driven into exile and passed into the land of spirits taking one half of my heart with him; and Hazlitt has since taken the other half and I have been as hollow as a tomb ever since. I have never thought of the work since except when called to my recollection by others — Yes, once, when Hazlitt made my ears tingle with his opinion of it.

The Hazlitt reminiscence alluded to is well known: the great dramatic critic estimated Wells's genius highly, *and advised him to stick to the legal profession*. This was meant as a warning respecting the sorrows of authors; and was taken to heart for a time; "and," says Wells, "the critical assassination, the massacre of my old friend Keats has cured me for ever of any desire for criticism and public favour."¹

There are points in the foregoing account of the first literary adventures of Wells which might well dispose the dispassionate student to prefer the Rossetti tradition current ever since the painter-poet, on seeing Horne's mention of *Joseph*, in *A New Spirit of the Age*, went to the British Museum, found a copy of the "Scriptural drama," and set a number of choice spirits on fire with his discovery of a lost poet who had created something not surpassed by any work later than Shakespeare's. That tradition was that the book had "fallen still-born from the press" and been neglected ever since. Indeed Wells used the quoted words himself

¹ Letter to H. B. F. July, 1875.

in his first letter to me (then a stranger to him), asking me to see the edition of 1876 through the press.¹ He had certainly no sordid motive in misleading Linton; but, always spicy and racy in style, and magnetic in personality even with much sea and land between him and the magnetized, he had a breezy delight in making people do things and believe things out of the common. Let us take Keats's words "vanity and love of intrigue" out of their dreadful context and regard them in that more kindly sense, as part and parcel of the dramatic faculty, innate, inalienable, and not to be escaped from, literary world or no literary world; and we shall probably conclude that the naughty words "sold like wildfire" slipped in as a part of the picture Wells was drawing of what at that time seemed to him a somewhat

¹ Horne was personally aware of the failure of the book. He knew well Whittaker's reader and publishing clerk, F. G. Tomlins, author of *Garcia, a Tragedy*, and *A Brief View of the English Drama* (1840), who told him emphatically that, though he saw "what fine stuff there was in it," it "did not sell." According to Tomlins the "biblical people" did not buy it because they thought they knew all about that old story, the small critics did not see the poetry in it, the monthly writers had enough to do with poets and poetlings already popular, and the great quarterlies "scarcely ever write about a poet till he has been dead at least half a century."

amusing literary experience. We shall then not search very closely for any “vanity” that may have lurked in the enjoyment of the new sensation that he, the centre of an attempted literary revival, thought far less highly of his book than his admirers did. And for “love of intrigue”—well, there is no need to be censorious if it did strike him as humorous that he had more than one wire to pull with one end in Britain and the other in Brittany. Thirty years later the same situation reproduced itself with more actors in it and more scope for both sorts of pardonable laughter up Wells’s sleeves. The beautiful passage about Keats and Hazlitt serves to recall his statement in another letter that, for three years after the issue of *Joseph*, he saw Hazlitt every day, “or rather every night,” but not between 1827 and 1830, when, Hazlitt dying in the autumn, Wells and Horne, aged respectively thirty and twenty-seven, stood, as I understand it, together beside his corpse. On that occasion some iron gray locks of the “dacked-haired-critic”¹

¹ It was certainly to the shock-headed Hazlitt that Keats

were shorn off. These are now among my treasures; but Horne kept them till he died; and Wells, for his part, wrote the inscription for Hazlitt's tomb-stone which he and Horne got raised in the church-yard of St. Anne in Soho.

The two young poets had had a sort of disputation earlier in the year, which may have been accommodated there beside the great dead critic, or before. Horne had accused Wells of wasting his time in "pond-gazing" when he should have been looking after the interests of a Miss Hill of Leamington (whose sister he married), in a courtship affair; and Wells had replied in a dignified letter from Langbourn Charteris, arguing the point powerfully but wholly without wrath, quoting words of Horne's which were somewhat insulting, but saying himself nothing more provocative than that Horne's alluded when he concluded that charming piece of doggerel, *Teignmouth*, sent to Haydon in a letter from that town, with the much misprinted stanza —

Then who would go
Into dark Soho
And chatter with dack'd hair'd critics,
When he can stay
For the new-mown hay,
And startle the dappled Prickets?

mother was “as good as a Witch” when she had said that “her eldest-born” (“Orion,” to-wit) “would quarrel with *anybody*.” Wells protested against his friend’s unjust view of the case; and Horne left the letter among his papers with a memorandum for my guidance, that he had for years believed that he did Wells “the injustice of which he complains.”

Wells did not stick to his profession very long, but retired into the country and lived an open-air life—shooting, fishing (or “pond-gazing” as Horne called it), boating, flower-growing, and so on; and, later, he added the hunting of large game in Brittany. How his time was divided between South Wales and Hertfordshire I cannot at present state precisely; but that Broxbourne became the Hertfordshire town of his headquarters not later than 1840 or 1841 would seem to be clear from a plea put forward by his son in a recent cause célèbre.¹ But the state-

¹ Charles Wells, the younger, of whom he wrote in 1877 to Horne in the curious semi-French lingo of his last days, “Charley is Ingineer—he is in Spain directing machines and a mine”—had engineered some vast practical jokes by 1893, and had become the hero of that popular song “The Man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo.” The English courts did

ment made at the time of his death, that, after leaving England in 1840 at about the time of his son's birth, he never came back, is a fiction. He was at Broxbourne in December, 1846, in which year he saw Linton once at Woodford. It was at that period that *Claribel*, one of a projected second series of *Stories after Nature*, was published. It was not exactly a free gift to Linton, who published it in *The Illuminated Magazine* and offered an *honorarium* to which Wells assented, just before the *Illuminated* went crash. Whether Wells got his money for that, I know not. But it was certainly with a view to business that he wrote the two boar-hunting papers ultimately accepted by *Fraser's Magazine*, to Wells's great relief, when the *Illuminated* and the *Illustrated Family Journal* had both failed, dragging with them

not take the performances pleasantly; and the "Ingenieur" was imprisoned here for some years; but on regaining his liberty his partiality for that kind of hoax which brings large sums of money out of the pockets of the simple into the coffers of the hoaxter led him to acts which the French government, in its turn, regarded as "worthy of bonds." Being arrested in England with a lady accomplice, he stated last year, to avoid extradition, that he was a British subject, born at Broxbourne, his age on the charge sheet being noted as 71. The plea was not admitted and "Monte Carlo Wells," as he is generally called, has now been condemned to imprisonment in France.

a lot of labour which Wells had put into a number of stories, etc., written expressly for Linton.

At the end of 1846 he was still engaged in his attempt to make something out of literature, and wrote to Linton thus:

I am making some progress, am well on *Fraser's Magazine*, and hope to compass another or two shortly. If it should turn out that I am right and all my friends are wrong—and I have one evidence in my favour—my game is made—I can go on with passion, power, and nature for ever.

The *Fraser* papers were entitled *A Boar-Hunt in Brittany* (October, 1846), and *Love Passages in the Life of Perron the Breton, a Sequel to the Boar-Hunt in Brittany* (June, 1847); and these as well as *Claribel* can be read by the curious—*Claribel* both as a prose tale in the *Illuminated* and in a reprint of the *Stories after Nature*,¹ and also in the form of a little drama which Linton made from it and published in 1865 with his own *Poems* in a book called *Claribel and other Poems*.

In 1850 Wells's wife (born Emily Jane

¹ *Stories after Nature*, by Charles Wells, with a Preface by W. J. Linton. London: Lawrence and Bullen, 1891.

Hill) visited London with the view of endeavouring to get *Joseph* republished. The attempt failed, though Wells had revised the book very powerfully at the instance of his friends and admirers; and the worst of it was that the revised copy was lost. Swinburne had seen it and used it in quoting passages for that article which James Anthony Froude refused to insert in *Fraser's Magazine*, and which ultimately, when Wells had made a second copy of the revised *Joseph*, appeared in *The Fortnightly Review* for February 1, 1875.

The results of Wells's literary campaign of the fifth decade of the last century were doubtless on the whole disappointing; and for the next two decades he was generally occupied otherwise, though writing both prose and verse when the spirit moved.

But from Mrs. Wells's visit of 1850 came one piece of good luck for those of us who do not cease to deplore the loss of Wells's works, burnt by him on her death in 1874. One of her letters to Linton about *Joseph* happened to be written on the first two pages of a sheet of note-paper whereon, in a poetic

mood, Wells had been scribbling something, much of which looked hopelessly indecipherable. This had probably not been observed when Mrs. Wells took up the paper and began her letter. However, when these papers came into my hands, the terrors of the scrawl at the back of Mrs. Wells's letter fascinated me, and behold, of a sudden, there loomed out of the tangled drafting a line or two of a song to Bacchus which Horne tried to recall for my benefit from the depths of his memory, about the year 1876, but could get no further than

Let the wine o'erflow the beaker!

So inspired, I chained myself to the manuscript like a suffragette to the railings of No. 10 Downing Street, or the grille of the lady's gallery at the House of Commons. I was more promptly rewarded than the suffragettes — who have not yet attained. And my reward was not only the song to Bacchus which Horne tried in vain to recollect, but another still more beautiful. I always supposed till quite lately that everything of that kind perished in the holocaust of 1874; and

it is with much joy that I give my friends of The Bibliophile Society the first sight of these lovely lyrics, which will certainly pass into the anthologies of the twentieth century and later.¹

What manner of man it was that wrote those lyrics may be fitly stated at this point, for it is to Linton's pen, though not unfortunately to his competent brush, that we owe the best portraiture of Wells in his prime. Actual portrait there is none save that delightful miniature by Wageman which he gave to Horne and Horne passed on to me. From Wells himself I have it that no representation of him but the "pocket Byron," as he called it, with the reddish curls and blue-gray eyes, done when he was about twenty-three years old, was ever taken of him — not even a photograph. The man who turned up at Woodford and made himself known as Charles Wells is thus sketched by Linton:

"A healthy, ruddy-faced, weather-hardened, fleshless man, bright and cheery, foxy-looking (if it may be said without prejudice), the very type of a wiry sporting squire, who

¹ See page 117 of this Year Book.

looked as if he lived always out-of-doors, and had too keen a relish for fresh air and following the hounds to have ever dreamed upon the side of Parnassus.”¹

More than once I have had occasion to give accounts of the part I was called on to take in the resuscitation of *Joseph and his Brethren*; and Mr. Watts-Dunton has made pleasant reference to that matter in the re-print of the second edition in *The World's Classics*, with Swinburne's *Essay* as an introduction, and some interesting reminiscences of his own relations with Rossetti and with Wells himself.²

Of the further and final revision accomplished at the close of the poet's long life a good deal will have to be said when I perform, as I shall do either personally or by deputy, the charge laid on me by Wells of bringing it before the world. When at

¹ *The Academy*, for the 12th of April, 1879, to which the great wood-engraver, then practising his art at New Haven, Connecticut, had written to question some points in an obituary notice by Mr. Edmund Gosse.

² *Joseph and his Brethren* | a Dramatic Poem | by Charles Wells | with an Introduction by | Algernon Charles Swinburne | and a Note on Rossetti and Charles Wells by | Theodore Watts-Dunton. | Henry Frowde | Oxford University Press | London, New York, Toronto and Melbourne [1908].

length he became convinced that the poem was of permanent importance, he considered it needful to bring the character of Joseph up to a suitable level of prominence. The whole story of our correspondence on this subject I cannot tell now. Thirty-six years ago I had some misgiving as to the scheme; and he wrote to me at great length defending it, and seriously, though in his usual humorous vein, laying down the law as to what the ultimate form of the book was to be. He insisted that he had addressed himself to two publics: first,

The élite, the knowing ones, the peep o'day boys, the ne plus ultras — That is the Poets (for the most part), Savants — humanitarians, Philosophers, and nothingarians — The spirits of *the Age* — in other words Atheists, Deists, anti-christians — materialists, *libres penseurs*, etc.

As to my second public they must be content to set their half against the other and pish and pshaw and pestiforise in their turn.

My scales of Justice are equal, "But," say you, "the public — *proprement dit* — the paying publick! ! ! ! critics, publishers etc."

Do you suppose I have revised the book for them? "Let not thy discreet heart believe it."

I am no author, no Poet, nor of the Age — I may

have *invented* a Book that will live — I believe it — in spite of the last and future, certainly present, generation — and should have been happy to have ended as I began, nameless — to me name and fame is a myth. . . .

As to the public who won't have me — listen to the old song — they "may go to the Devil and shake themselves" — if they like the new song better, they may "shake themselves and go to the Devil." If they can do without me — I can do without them — Crusoe's boat is afloat, and Joseph will pilot it into deep waters — with Phrax for ballast. —

If as I am accused I have allowed my hero to speak in his *character of Prophet* too much — of God — Jesus Christ — Heaven — Virtue, etc. and if *by chance*, it is found to be a good thing hereafter — I have reversed the old saying, "too much of a good thing is good for nothing."

In any case I have done ample justice to my subject on *both* sides — and those who don't like the one have always the privilege of skipping to the other.

The instructions as to the final edition could not be carried out till the publishers had sold their edition, which took a considerable time; and when that revision of 1875 had passed out of currency, I was too fully occupied with pressing work, public and private, to see to the passing of the final revision of 1877 through the press and the find-

ing of a publisher; but now that the dramatic poem as made known by Swinburne has been popularized in *The World's Classics*, it seems to me that the enlarged work which Wells determined to hand on to posterity should be duly handed on; and I hope soon to do my belated part for a man whom I regard not only with strong personal affection, but as a unique figure in the literature of last century. Wells had a powerful understanding, great depth of poetic passion, a keen eye for the beauties of Nature, a wide vision of the human pageant of the ages, and enormous power of realizing and depicting character. His tone is wholly fresh and wholesome and his relish for the mere joy of living unfailing. His personal attachments were warm and strong; and that to Horne reasserted itself in 1876 with great force. At the time of the resuscitation of *Joseph* he was not aware that Horne, who emigrated to Australia, had returned; and, when I mentioned a Mr. Horne to him, he wrote to enquire whether my Mr. Horne was his Mr. Horne, and if so whether I would put them in communication. I did; and

Horne and he exchanged beautiful letters and precious gifts. To me he wrote of his old friend with most refreshing love and admiration; and to both of us he sent terribly vivid accounts of the sufferings of his final years, with small, vital, humourous word-pictures indicative of the fortitude with which he was awaiting the great Enemy's approach. Towards the end he replied to an enquiry of mine as to his health — “It is not only so-so — but so-so! so-o-o-o-o” — and in answer to questions about his material comfort he wrote:

I have the first society here and the first *salons* open to me — but can’t enjoy it — perfectly isolated — having nothing and wanting nothing — inhabiting one of my apartments — one bed — no servant — and *done for* by the family below. From my former habit of life it is a terrible comedown in one year. Nevertheless, when any of ‘em are depressed, they come to me to be screwed up — and always go away merry and laughing. — For me, I am as cheerful as the day is long. It is saying much for it is often very long indeed. It is a fixed infirmity — there is certainty of worse but no hope of better. . . .

Adieu, my good and excellent friend —

Joe

Perhaps the old poet's defense of the new version of *Joseph* may be held to justify Mr. Watts-Dunton's view that Wells was "a deeply religious man;" but his record of an extraordinary gift which the poet was said by Smith Williams to have developed — that of raising the dead to life — is not convincing. From one of his letters to Linton I gather that Wells admired in his colleague of the forties that well known devotion to the cause of the people and to the forward social movement generally, especially on the ground that that colleague expected no reward in another world and therefore ought to have the reward of success in this. There is ample evidence that he himself believed earnestly in a personal immortality; and I do not doubt that he died in the Roman Catholic faith, which he had adopted before 1845; but the nearest thing to evidence on these last points which I find among my own papers very nearly escaped me. In one of his last letters he made me a promise on the *l'homme propose* understanding which he expressed by what on close examination turns out to be the letters D. V. with a little

cross, which from the context is certainly meant seriously and not in the free and easy sense in which light folk appoint meetings “D. V. and W. P.” As to the incident of the young lady of good family whose body he prayed over till she came to life — I dare-say her people thought she was dead; but my firm conviction is that she was like dear Bret Harte’s lady who reappeared inopportunely in the little girl’s story — “she was in a trance and kem to.” The case illustrates Wells’s personal magnetism, sagacity, and perhaps his still vital love of a practical joke, rather than deep religious feeling. His keenness of observation told him the girl was alive; in the guise of prayer he put forth his will that she should awake; and, if the others liked to think she had risen from the dead, the mummery hurt no one, and made a triumphant addition to the list of cases in which he had made people do what he liked.

It is impossible to avoid a feeling of relief that the development of the spirit of hoax in the next generation was not revealed till after the genial and brave old poet was no longer within reach of any remorse he might

have felt if he had been compelled to put two and two together and say to himself: "Alas, if I had not made a fine art of hoaxing and practical joking, peradventure a better tradition as to the due limits of that art might have prevailed and been recognized by 'Ingenier Charley,' my son." Had it fallen to my lot to offer consolation to the dear old man in such circumstances, I would have said to him, "Take heart, friend! Remember Shelley's words, *No man can be truly disgraced by the action of another!*"

At the end of his life, suspecting that, over and above the execution of his wishes in regard to the next edition of *Joseph*, I might tell his personal story or some parts of it which he divulged with no great readiness, he did not threaten me with the converse of Smith Williams's tale: he did not say he would ascend on to the roof and pray the gods to strike me dead, or even dumb; but he did mention that, in his opinion, I ought to have a policeman for my *valet de chambre*, and that he would at need leave a considerable sum of money to some one charged with my assassination.

In this light-hearted frame of mind which had been the habit of a long life-time he lay gazing on the blue Mediterranean as framed by the window of his bedroom, awaiting in cheerful endurance the last summons. He had written to Horne of his lost wife that she "was but waiting in the next room for him;" and he was ready to join her. It was on the 17th of February, 1879, that he went.

TWO SONGS BY CHARLES WELLS

RECENTLY DISCOVERED AND TRANSCRIBED BY

H. BUXTON FORMAN

A SONG OF WATCHING

I

O I am weary watching for thy coming,
And yet thou comest not.
Day after day my weary feet are roaming
To that dear spot
Where thou didst bless me with those words
so vain,
“We soon shall meet again.”

II

My soul is worn with prayer for thy return-
ing,
And yet thou dost not come.
All through the long, long night my lamp is
burning
In thy lone home —
Thy home, my heart, where echo yet in vain
Thy words, “we meet again.”

A SONG TO BACCHUS¹

I

Let the wine o'erflow the beaker,
Pouring o'er the Bacchants richly sculp-
tured there;
Never cease thy song's stream, eloquentest
speaker,
Nor, till all believe, thy sweet discoursing
spare.

II

Let the wine o'erflow the beaker!
Whisper to us Bacchus how thy life is fair;
Speak out roundly, Bacchus, fortunatest
seeker,
Thou most true bliss finder, tell us how
and where.

III

Let the wine o'erflow the beaker!
Lift our hearts, strong-winged ascender,
neath thy care!
Yet, yet once more bless — thy voice is grow-
ing weaker —
Bless us with those ripe lips, on thy heav-
en's stair!

¹ This song probably belongs to a poem called *Bacchus and Silenus*, described by Horne to me in rapturous terms and supposed to have been burnt by Wells in 1874. — H. B. F.

THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY

REPORT OF THE TREASURER STATEMENT OF CONDITION YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1912

INCOME AND LIABILITIES

Eleventh Year Book . . .	\$ 2,834.75
Initiation fees and interest .	271.85
	—————
	\$ 3,106.60
Surplus and working fund	\$17,490.27
Loan account	2,500.00
	—————
	\$19,990.27
	—————
	\$23,096.87
Advance payments on pub- lications	322.25
	—————
	\$23,419.12

ASSETS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Due from members . . .	\$ 2,500.83
Invested in unfinished pub- lications	11,728.67
Cash in bank	5,477.77
General publication expense	3,106.60
(Eleventh Year Book, and partly on Gray's <i>Elegy</i> , and the <i>Deserted Village</i>)	
Books held for members, not charged	605.25
	—————
	\$23,419.12

LIABILITIES

Surplus and working fund	\$17,490.27
Loan	2,500.00
Advance payments from members	322.25
	—————
	\$20,312.52

ASSETS

Unfinished publications Ac- count	\$11,728.67
Due from members	2,500.83
Cash in bank	5,477.77
Books held for members .	605.25
	—————
	\$20,312.52

Approved:

SETCHELL AND LUTHER,
Certified Public Accountants

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

To the Members:

The twelfth annual meeting of The Bibliophile Society was held in Boston, on March 14, 1913, at Room 506 Berkeley Building. The Treasurer's Report was read and approved. The Officers and Council for 1912 were reëlected for the ensuing year.

All vacancies created during the past year have been filled from the waiting list. All other details of the Society's work during the year are sufficiently set forth in the Report of the Council and the Treasurer's Report, both printed herein.

J. ARNOLD FARRER,
Secretary

BIBLIOGRAPHY

XXXIV

1912 | THE | BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY | ELEVENTH
YEAR BOOK

One volume, royal octavo, pp. 16 + 7 — 143 + 3. Printed by the University Press, on white Holland handmade paper, with the Society's usual watermark. Bound in boards with yellow buckram sides and cloth back. Titlepage engraved by Arthur N. Macdonald. Five hundred copies issued to members, at \$5.75.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE BIBLIOPHILE SOCIETY

ARTICLE I

NAME AND OBJECT

SECTION 1. This Society shall be called The Bibliophile Society.

SECT. 2. Its object shall be the study and promotion of the arts pertaining to fine book-making and illustrating, and the occasional publication of specially designed and illustrated books, for distribution among its members at a minimum cost of production.

ARTICLE II

ORIGIN AND MEMBERSHIP

SECT. 1. This Society is founded by Nathan Haskell Dole, Charles E. Hurd, William D. T. Trefry, Henry H. Harper, J. Arnold Farrer, W. P. Trent, and John Paul Bocock, who constitute themselves its members, together with others who may be elected as hereinafter provided.

ARTICLE III

MEETINGS

SECT. 1. Annual meetings of The Bibliophile

Society shall be held in Boston, Mass., on the first Tuesday in January of each year, and five (5) members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the Society.

ARTICLE IV

GOVERNMENT

SECT. 1. The government and management of this Society is entrusted to a Council, composed of seven of its members, who shall exercise the usual powers of a Board of Directors, in accordance with the Act under which the Society is incorporated.

SECT. 2. The Directors named on the certificate of incorporation shall hold office until their successors shall be elected. There shall be held an annual meeting of the Council on the first Tuesday in January of each year, for the purpose of transacting such business as may come before the Society. At any such meeting, any officer or director may be removed from office by a majority vote of the entire Council.

SECT. 3. Members to fill vacancies in the Council, in the interim between any two regular annual meetings, may be appointed by the President. They shall hold office until a successor is elected.

SECT. 4. The officers of this Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The Council shall be chosen annually by the members. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be chosen by the members of the Society.

ARTICLE V

SECT. 1. The Council shall elect annually from its own number a President and Vice-President of the Society, who shall hold office until their successors are elected.

SECT. 2. The Council shall have power to admit, by ballot, candidates for membership in the Society. Two ballots cast in the negative shall exclude any candidate.

SECT. 3. The Council shall have power to expel or suspend any member of the Society by a majority vote, after giving one month's previous notice in writing to such member, setting forth cause for expulsion.

SECT. 4. If any member shall pass three successive publications of the Society, such failure to subscribe for the works issued shall be construed as an implied lack of interest in the Society, and such member may be dropped from the rolls at the discretion of the Council.

SECT. 5. The Council shall have power to make rules for its own government.

ARTICLE VI

THE PRESIDENT

SECT. 1. The President shall preside at the meetings of the Society or of the Council, and in his absence the Vice-President shall preside.

ARTICLE VII

THE TREASURER

SECT. 1. The Treasurer shall collect all initiation fees, and shall keep the accounts of the Society. It shall

be his duty to collect all moneys due the Society, and to render at each annual meeting a statement showing the receipt and expenditure of such; and he shall have the custody of the funds and accounts of the Society, and sign all checks, acceptances, and other obligations issued by the Society.

ARTICLE VIII

THE SECRETARY

SECT. 1. The Secretary shall give notice of all annual meetings of the Society seven days before date of meeting, and shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of such meetings.

ARTICLE IX

MEMBERSHIP

SECT. 1: Application for membership must be submitted to the Society in writing, and passed upon by the Council.

SECT. 2. The membership of this Society shall be limited to five hundred members, to which no one not having attained majority shall be eligible, and it is desired to include in the membership only representative people who are interested in limited publications and rare books, from the standpoint of their true literary and artistic worth; the Society reserving the right to reject any application for membership without assigning cause.

SECT. 3. No act or deed of any officer, member, board of selection, or committee of this Society shall bind any individual member thereof to any obligation without his

(or her) voluntary acquiescence in writing addressed to the Society, and in such case the amount of the obligation shall be stipulated.

ARTICLE X

ENTRANCE FEE

SECT. 1. The entrance fee for each member shall be \$10.00. There shall be an annual due of fifteen dollars. If payment of the entrance fee is not made within thirty days after the election of a member, the membership may be declared void by the Council.

ARTICLE XI

MEETINGS OF THE COUNCIL

SECT. 1. The Council may meet at such time and place as it may elect.

SECT. 2. A majority of the Council shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE XII

COMMITTEES

SECT. 1. The Council shall in itself constitute a committee of selection, whose duty it shall be to determine upon the advisability of publishing such works or edition of works as may be recommended to the Society. A majority vote shall govern in all cases.

ARTICLE XIII

PUBLICATIONS

SECT. 1. The Society solicits the coöperation of its members in suggesting and recommending suitable works

for publication. All such suggestions and recommendations shall be submitted to the Council, who will print a list of the most desirable works under consideration, a copy of which list shall be mailed to each member of the Society, with the request that all members shall indicate their preference of one from among the works suggested (it being understood that such act shall in no case be construed as an obligation upon the part of the member to subscribe for a copy of such work), and the work receiving the largest number of votes shall be taken under advisement by the Council, whose duty it shall be to ascertain the cost of production, and to report to all members of the Society of the name, number of volumes, terms of subscription, and price of such work; then, if within thirty days the Society shall receive a sufficient number of membership subscriptions to justify the work will be undertaken.

SECT. 2. In no case may the total number of copies of any edition issued exceed the enrolled membership of the Society, which shall be limited to five hundred.

SECT. 3. No subscription may be received for any publication of the Society later than six months following the announcement of such publication except by special permission of the Council, who may at their discretion declare an edition closed within thirty days from the date of announcement.

SECT. 4. In no case shall a copy of any publication issued by this Society be offered for sale to a non-member, except by special authorization by the Council.

SECT. 5. Any member failing to pay an obligation

within sixty days after having been notified in writing of the same, shall be subject to expulsion from the membership at the discretion of the Council.

ARTICLE XIV

CONSTRUCTION OF CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS, AND PROVISION FOR SUCH OTHER AND FUR- THER RULES AND REGULATIONS AS ARE NOT PROVIDED FOR IN SAME

SECT. 1. In respect to all questions of construction of the constitution and by-laws, the decision of the Council shall control and be binding.

SECT. 2. The Council shall make such other and further rules and regulations for the government of the Society as in their judgment are required.

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